Met Office

April 2014

The averaging period used for the following assessment was 1981-2010.

UK overview

April was overall another rather warm month, and was the fifth month in a row with UK average temperatures above average. The start and end of the month were rather unsettled, although pressure did build towards the middle of the month and most parts of England and Wales saw some fine weather between the 8th and the 19th with rainfall largely confined to north-west Scotland. During the last ten days, showers, thundery at times, affected mainly southern areas, with some localised downpours in places.

The UK mean temperature was 9.2 °C, which is 1.8 °C above the 1981-2010 long-term average, making it the equal third warmest April in a series since 1910, but not as warm as 2007 or 2011. Temperatures were above average in all areas. Frosts were few, and the number of air frosts was equal third lowest since 1961. Rainfall was variable across the country, with totals well below normal in East Anglia and well above normal in parts of southern England, giving an overall figure of 93% of average. Sunshine was close to average everywhere, with overall 98% of average sunshine hours.

A maximum temperature of 23.1 °C was recorded at Inverailort (Highland) on the 21st. A minimum temperature of -5.2 °C was recorded at Aboyne (Aberdeenshire) on the 20th. In the 24 hours ending at 0900 GMT on the 6th, 98.8 mm of rain fell at Ennerdale, Black Sail (Cumbria). A wind gust of 67 mph was recorded at Capel Curig (Gwynedd) on the 6th.

Weather impacts

Although there were spells of fine early-spring weather, there were also a few cases of dense fog at the beginning and end of the month. This caused minor travel disruption on roads and delays to flights at airports across the country. Heavy rain affected some areas during the last three days of the month, but despite some incidences of lightning there were no major impacts.

Early in the month some very high levels of air pollution were recorded from industrial sources in the UK and blown in from the continent along with fine Saharan dust that affected southern and eastern parts of the country. Those with lung and heart conditions were advised to avoid any strenuous activity and asthmatics warned of an increased risk of attacks during the period.

England diary of highlights

The month opened with a few days of unsettled weather, but after the first week high pressure dominated for a while and most areas remained fine. However, low pressure was often centred near or to the south of the country during the last ten days, leading to some localised downpours particularly over central southern England. There were some pleasantly warm days at times through the month.

The mean temperature for the month was 1.8 °C above the 1981-2010 average, and it was the fourth warmest April in a series from 1910. Rainfall overall was 90% of average, but this figure masks significant regional variations, with East Anglia having less than half of average but parts of Hampshire and Surrey having around twice as much as the average. Sunshine amounts were close to or just a little below average for most of the country, with 94% of average overall.

1st to 7th:

After some heavy overnight showers for northern areas, the 1st was mainly dry and bright, with temperatures reaching 20.5 °C at Gravesend (Kent). Light and patchy rain spread slowly north-east during the 2nd but it remained warm and dry in the south-east; there was poor air quality in parts of the south and the Midlands. On the 3rd rain spread slowly from the south-west into central areas, but it was warm again with a south-east wind which maintained the poor air quality in some areas. The 4th was mainly dry with sunny spells, but less warm. A frontal system brought showers and stronger winds to many areas on the 5th. The 6th saw some sunshine, but also showers which were heaviest and most frequent in southern areas. The 7th was unsettled, with rain or showers for many areas; the south-east saw some of the heaviest rain with Wych Cross (East Sussex) recording 22.8 mm.

8th to 19th:

The 8th was mainly dry with sunny spells and only a few light showers. It was mainly dry and sunny on the 9th, but cloudier with some patchy rain in the north and north-east. The 10th started foggy in places; many areas were cloudy through the day but mainly dry. Dry with a few sunny spells on the 11th. The 12th was mainly dry except for some light and patchy rain in the north and east. Dry again on the 13th, 14th and 15th with sunshine in the south but more cloud further north. It was another mainly dry, bright and warm day on the 16th, but with some patchy rain in the north at times, and temperatures reached 17.7 °C at St James's Park (Greater London). It was cooler by the 17th with a north-west wind, and, although generally dry and bright, eastern areas had light rain. The 18th and 19th were dry with plenty of sunshine.

20th to 30th:

The winds turned easterly on the 20th, bringing spells of rain for many central and southern areas, with Dunkeswell (Devon) recording 30.8 mm, whilst the north remained mainly dry. The 21st started dry and bright but heavy showers developed in the afternoon with isolated thunderstorms in the Home Counties; Alice Holt (Hampshire) recorded 28.6 mm, but again the north fared better with temperatures reaching 20.9 °C at Bridgefoot (Cumbria). The 22nd was a day of sunshine and scattered showers. A band of rain made slow progress from the south-west on the 23rd, many eastern areas remaining dry. The 24th was mainly dry and bright, although some very isolated but heavy scattered showers broke out in the afternoon. The 25th began with thunderstorms in Hampshire and Dorset, and further heavy rain spread from the east to many southern and central areas resulting in 27.0 mm being recorded at Winterbourne (West Midlands). The 26th was a day of sunshine and showers in western and southern areas, with the east remaining dry. An area of low pressure centred in the English Channel on the 27th resulted in scattered showers for southern and central areas again, and a band of rain spread north up the east coast. The 28th started dry but cloudy for many areas, with isolated and at times heavy thunderstorms developing by the afternoon in southern and central areas. A band of patchy rain spread into the south-east during the morning of the 29th and scattered showers developed in southern areas in the afternoon with thunderstorms in Hampshire and Sussex. After a mainly dry morning on the 30th, a band of rain spread into the far south-west by midday and slowly edged east; scattered showers developed in the afternoon in northern areas.

Wales diary of highlights

The month began with rather unsettled conditions for a week, but high pressure dominated through the middle part of the month with a spell of dry and warm weather. The last ten days saw a return of more showery conditions but still interspersed with sunny spells.

The mean temperature was 1.6 °C above the 1981-2010 average, and this was the sixth warmest April in a series since 1910. It was drier than average towards the north and wetter to the south, with an overall figure of 88% of average rainfall. Sunshine was near normal, with 97% of average.

1st to 6th:

The 1st was dry but mainly cloudy, with showers reaching the far south-west in the evening. The 2nd was generally overcast, with rain for many areas. The 3rd remained overcast with rain spreading from the south into most other areas during the morning. By contrast, the 4th was dry and sunny. The 5th was a day of sunshine and showers, with strengthening south-west winds. The 6th saw rain in most areas and a band of heavier showers spreading from the west in the afternoon, with a peak wind gust of 67 mph at Capel Curig (Gwynedd).

7th to 19th:

Rain moved east through the morning of the 7th, clearing to isolated showers. The 8th was mainly dry and bright, with only isolated light showers. Mainly dry on the 9th, with some sunshine particularly in the south and west. The 10th was cloudy with a few light showers in the north-west then some sunshine later. It was dry and sunny on the 11th. The 12th was mainly dry but cloudy. Dry again on the 13th with sunshine in the south but more cloud in the north, then it continued to be dry and bright on the 14th, 15th and 16th. The 17th was dry but cloudier. It was dry and sunny on the 18th and 19th.

20th to 30th:

Cloudy on the 20th, with rain in the afternoon and evening. Warm on the 21st, with 20.0 °C recorded at Hawarden Airport (Flintshire), but heavy rain developed in the south towards the end of the day. It was cloudy on the 22nd with periods of rain, becoming showery, particularly in the south-west. The 23rd was mainly cloudy with a band of patchy rain moving east through the morning. Mainly dry at first on the 24th, with isolated showers in the west and south by the afternoon. The 25th was mainly cloudy, with rain during the afternoon. The 26th had sunshine and showers occurring mainly in the south. It was mainly cloudy on the 27th, apart from the far north-west which had periods of showery rain. The 28th had some sunshine, but showers developed by the afternoon, particularly in the south. Some fog patches early on the 29th, then mainly dry with some sunshine, but isolated showers in the south-east. The 30th had some sunshine, but showers developed by the afternoon.

Scotland diary of highlights

The month began unsettled, cool and showery, but it became milder, leading to a mostly settled period in mid-month with rain in the north west. The latter part of the month was unsettled once more, but still generally mild.

April was another warmer than average month, with the mean temperature 1.8 °C above the 1981-2010 average. This was therefore the fourth warmest April in a series since 1910. Many areas were somewhat wetter than average, but some parts of the south-west and north-east were drier, giving an overall rainfall figure for Scotland of 103% of average. It was a rather sunny month towards the north-west, and sunshine amounts overall were 102% of average.

1st to 13th:

Rain in the south on the 1st slowly cleared through the day, and it was mainly dry in the north. It was mostly fine on the 2nd but cloudy in the east. Most areas had a wet day on the 3rd, with 22.8 mm recorded at Salsburgh (Lanarkshire), but it became drier in the north-west. A wet start on the 4th in central and northern areas, but the rain cleared away to the north-east later. Most areas started dry on the 5th, but a weather system brought rain from the west through the day. It was wet again on the 6th with another weather system moving in from the west. Mainly dry at first in the north on the 7th, but rain spread across the south and east, with showers in the north-west. Most areas, especially the west, were showery on the 8th. A wet day for many areas on the 9th, especially in the north-west, with 29.0 mm recorded at Cassley (Sutherland). It was mostly dry at first on the 10th but showers developed through the day. The 11th started dry and bright for many areas but showers or longer spells of rain spread from the west later. Windy on the 12th with some scattered showers, especially in the west, and a maximum gust of 62 mph was recorded at Altnaharra (Sutherland). The

13th was wet and windy in most places, as a weather system moved across the country, with 32.8 mm of rain at Cluanie Inn (Highland) and a gust of 53 mph recorded at Edinburgh, Blackford Hill.

14th to 21st:

Dry and bright on the 14th but with a few scattered showers in the north. Another dry day followed on the 15th, and it was also quite warm. On the 16th it started dry for most but a cold front brought rain to the north and west later, which cleared to the south on the morning of the 17th to be replaced by blustery showers which were heavy at times in the strong winds, especially in the north where a maximum gust of 62 mph was reported at Wick (Caithness). Most areas were dry and bright on the 18th as pressure built across the country. It was dry, bright and warm on the 19th with the exception of the Outer Hebrides where it was cloudier with rain at times. Dry, bright and warm again on the 20th. Cloudy with fog or mist in places in the east at first on the 21st, and feeling cold in the easterly wind, but much brighter and warmer in the west with 20.4 °C recorded at West Freugh (Wigtownshire).

22nd to 30th:

Most areas had rain at some point on the 22nd, only the north-west and the Northern Isles staying mostly dry. A dry start on the 23rd before rain spread across the country from the west. The overnight rain cleared on the 24th and the rest of the day was mainly dry with some scattered showers. Overcast in the east on the 25th with mist or fog, brighter in the west, but rain spread to most areas during the evening. There was rain at first in the north and the south-west on the 26th, but it became mostly dry with some showers. Rain for most eastern areas on the 27th but it was drier and brighter in the west. Mostly dry on the 28th, and sunny in central and western areas, with Aviemore (Inverness-shire) reaching 22.0 °C, but also a few scattered showers. Mainly dry on the 29th with fog in the east. Mainly dry at first on the 30th but rain spread across the country from the south-west through the day to all but the far north.

Northern Ireland diary of highlights

The start of the month saw rain and showers interspersed with sunshine, before a period of rather more settled and spring-like weather. The latter part of the month brought some showers again.

The mean temperature was 2.0 °C above the 1981-2010 average, and this was the third warmest April in a series since 1910. It was rather drier than average, with only 58% of average rainfall. There was 110% of average sunshine hours.

1st to 7th:

After overnight rain, the 1st was mainly dry, bright and mild. Away from the north, periods of rain and showers persisted for much of the 2nd, clearing away northwards during the evening before further rain, heavy at times, spread in overnight into the 3rd, clearing to leave a mainly dry but cloudy day. Scattered showers at times on the 4th, but a good deal of dry if rather cloudy weather. There were widespread showers and longer spells of rain for much of the day on the 5th. Rain in the morning of the 6th cleared to leave a largely dry and sunny afternoon, and the temperature at Murlough (County Down) reached 17.5 °C. After a mainly dry morning on the 7th, many places had heavy showers in the afternoon.

8th to 21st:

Dry and bright on the 8th, but there was some light rain in the north in the evening and at first on the 9th, which cleared to leave a dry but rather cloudy day. Generally cloudy again on the 10th, with light rain for some places. The 11th was mainly dry, but with light rain later in some areas. A little rain for most areas on the 12th, clearing later. Mostly dry on the 13th and 14th apart from some rain later on the 13th and a few morning showers on the 14th. The 15th was a fine and sunny day in most areas. Continuing mainly dry over the next few days, bright on the 16th and 17th, and the 18th to 21st saw almost unbroken sunshine in many places. It

gradually became warmer too, with temperatures reaching 18.8 °C at Portglenone (County Antrim) on the 21st.

22nd to 30th:

The 22nd brought some early showers, then a band of rain spread in from the east through the afternoon. Rain cleared away northwards on the morning of the 23rd to leave a few showers but eastern areas became mainly dry. Showers in the north and east at times during the 24th and 25th, but mainly dry and sunny elsewhere. Rain, heavy in places, spread northwards overnight into the 26th, clearing most places by mid-morning, then it was brighter with just scattered showers. The 27th was largely dry and sunny. Mainly dry again on the 28th but overcast in many places. Bright and dry again on the 29th, and with a southerly wind it became warmer with 20.0 °C recorded at Portglenone. Rain spread from the south-west in the afternoon of the 30th, becoming patchy as it moved north before another band of rain followed in the evening.

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